

# Circuit

A monthly employee publication of the Bonneville Power Administration

## Corporate group gives top service

Three work sections with more than 50 employees used to handle disbursements, payroll and travel at BPA. That was before the mid 1990s when the major streamlining efforts began. In the years since, BPA combined those groups into one. And the group cut its cumulative number by more than half.

Just over five years ago, BPA's travel group had 20 employees, payroll had 12 and disbursements had 18. Today, 23 people in one group handle all the chores of those former groups.

Charlotte Scott is a former travel employee who now works in the new disbursement group. She says that six people today do the highly specialized payroll work. The other 16 staff handle travel and pay all of BPA's bills.

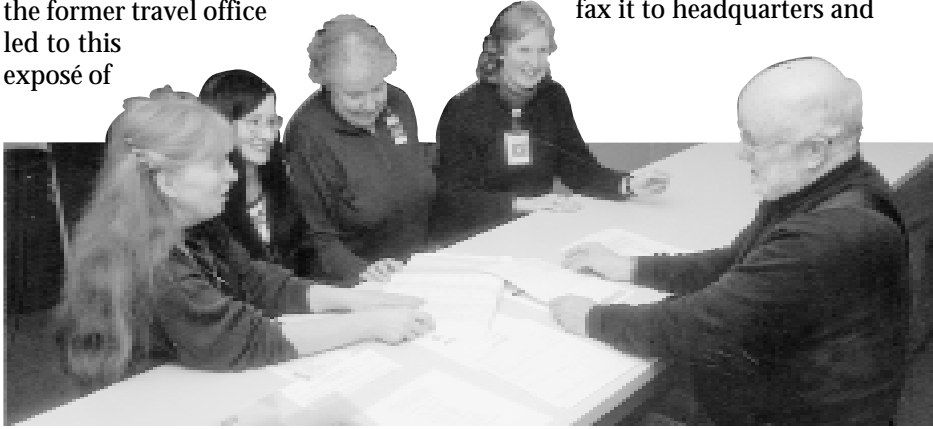
The three former groups were located in financial operations. The new disbursement operations group is in the Corporate business line. Besides the staffing cuts, Scott says, disbursement did many other things to help trim costs. Some efforts that the former groups began made the staff and other cost cuts possible.

The groups simplified their forms and processes. Travel arranged for direct billing with many hotels and motels. Groups streamlined steps for employees to get reimbursed for their work expenses. And computers helped automate more of the work.

Employees can now take care of most of their travel and financial needs by e-mail or over the phone. Still, payroll forms need signatures so disbursement keeps its headquarters service center open. Folks can walk into the second floor center to take care of other finance or travel matters as well.

While the combined group has cut costs and workforce numbers, it hasn't cut service. "Customer service is the most important thing to all of us," Scott says. "Inside or out, we try to give the same service," she says.

The proof of that service comes from the high marks the group gets from BPA workers and other groups. A recent e-mail that praised the former travel office led to this exposé of



Corporate disbursement combines the former travel, payroll and disbursements offices into one work group since BPA's major reorganization of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The group's customer service center offers one-stop service for employees who can also use e-mail, electronic forms or the telephone for travel and some other paperwork. (Left to right) Charlotte Scott, Phyllis Wells, Bonnie Smith, and Suzanne Smith are ready to help Forrest Meeks with any personal financial questions he has.

Photo by Jack Odgaard

the efficient behind-the-scenes support group.

Chief Operating Officer Steve Hickok got the e-mail from Larry King, customer account executive at Burley, Idaho. Hickok replied to King and sent a copy to the *Circuit*. Here's what King had to say.

"Yesterday, it hit me that sending in travel claims and being reimbursed for travel expenses has become as routine as breathing. I remembered back about six years and thought about the difficulty we had obtaining travel advances and the problems with the BPA credit card. We had long delays between submitting travel claims and getting reimbursed. It was a general pain in the neck just to deal with the travel office.

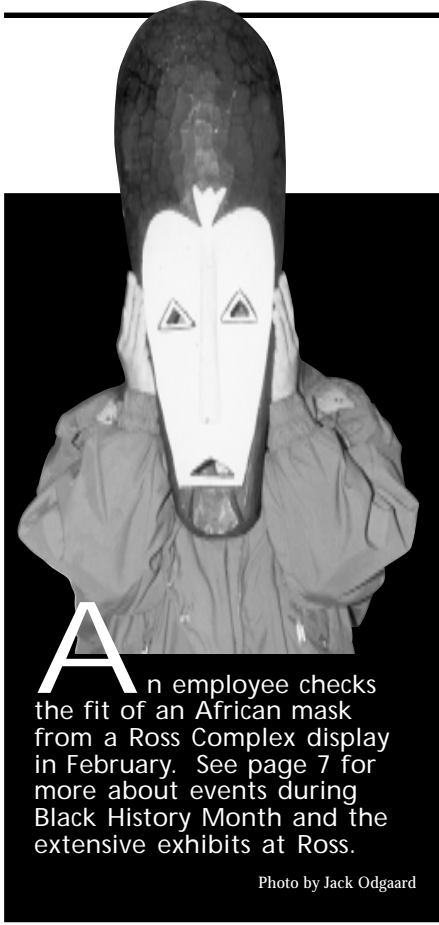
"But none of that is valid now. Today I sign a claim and fax it to Spokane to be signed by any one of a number of individuals. They fax it to headquarters and

usually within 48 hours – typically less time – I get an e-mail saying I should expect deposit into my account within two days.

"I don't recall an instance in the last several years when I have not received a timely payment or had to pay any travel costs out of my personal account.

"We pride ourselves in the Power Business Line for making a significant transition. We went from a stodgy bureaucratic response to customer need, to a team focused on response to customers. I think "the Travel Office" made greater changes.

*Continued on page 2*



An employee checks the fit of an African mask from a Ross Complex display in February. See page 7 for more about events during Black History Month and the extensive exhibits at Ross.

Photo by Jack Odgaard

"I need engineers," says Alan Courts, vice president for engineering and technical services, when asked why he's standing his ground in front of the BPA recruiting booth. A sea of college students ebbs and flows around him. Some stop to ask questions or offer a resumé.

Courts was part of a recruiting team assembled for the Minority Career Fair for Business, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences on Jan. 26. The fair was held at the University of Washington in Seattle and drew hundreds of college students, most in their last year of undergraduate study.

Joining Courts at the fair were Sanford Menashe, John Brank, Terry Klinefelter and Pat Alvarez. All the members of BPA's recruiting team wore denim shirts that sported BPA's logo.

Klinefelter and Alvarez are BPA's only two full-time recruiters. Together they assemble recruiting teams for some 26 career fairs BPA attends annu-



Hundreds of students visited BPA's booth at the University of Washington career fair for minority students in January. BPA recruiters and volunteers in blue denim shirts with BPA logos answered questions and handed out brochures. They were (left to right, facing right or forward): John Brank, Alan Courts, Pat Alvarez, Terry Klinefelter and Sanford Menashe.

Photos by Kyra Stewart

## BPA beefs up recruiting efforts

ally along the West Coast. Which fairs and team members depend on the positions BPA seeks to fill.

"Our recruiting program is well underway after being quiet for several years," says Alvarez. She took on a full-time recruiting role in September 1998. She says the ad hoc recruiting teams have been successful for the fairs. "But we also need to develop more in-depth relationships on campuses, with instructors and deans," she says.

BPA is looking for employees who might like to represent the agency to help develop those contacts. Members of the recruiting teams will be trained before they hit the streets.

"Recruiting is exciting work," Alvarez says.

"Talking about BPA and meeting students, journeymen, and others who can help us attain our goals really keeps me enthused."

While it can be stimulating and fun work as well, the recruiting business is serious stuff. BPA isn't the only outfit in desperate need of specific skills. So the agency has to find ways to compete with other firms who want the same qualified people.

Yet, even with the competition, recruiters have more supportive relationships than one might think. Klinefelter explains: "We 'network' with recruiters from other companies. We create name recognition for BPA and we share recruiting tips."

Besides the college recruiting for General Service (GS) entry-level positions, Alvarez is working on another source for people. She's helping the Technical Training Center build relationships with trade schools to fill apprentice positions. Filling these positions from schools is somewhat easy compared to filling journeyman positions, she says. "There is no readily available source for the experienced employees."

To help meet these needs, BPA is turning to the Internet. "The Internet as a recruiting tool is something brand new for BPA," says Klinefelter. BPA is currently running a pilot program with energyjobs.com, and may subscribe to its service if the pilot is successful.

And BPA is now posting its vacancy announcements on another Web site – energyinfosource.com. So the agency has gone national, to find talented folks who are looking to relocate in the Northwest.

**Kyra Stewart coordinates BPA community relations in Seattle**

### Inside the Circuit

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Why is management so preoccupied with the high performing organization initiatives?

Among the popular answers I have heard are that they are a hot new management trend the front office couldn't resist and that they are a knee-jerk reaction to last year's employee survey.

Skipping a recitation of the complete history of the HPO initiatives, I'll just note that they have



Steve Wright

actually been in development a long time — six of the seven vision elements (see table on page 3) we are using today were introduced at a strategic planning session in October 1998 and the HPO headlight team, which further developed and fleshed-out the vision, was formed in January 1999. We have also spent numerous hours devel-

oping means to integrate the new philosophy into the structure of the organization.

*Corporate group, continued from page 1*

“What I have not seen or read about is top management recognition of this change or an indication of agency appreciation for it. I would like to suggest some form of public recognition that notes the travel office's metamorphosis.”

*(Editor's note: The Circuit agrees with King, so here's a public pat on the back for the folks in BPA's Corporate disbursement group. We welcome employee compliments for other work groups as well.*

*BPA's new rewards and recognition program encourages people to recognize others — inside and outside your own group. Employees can nominate other groups, or people in those groups, for awards.*

*In addition, the Circuit is interested in examples like the one above from Larry King. If you know of a group that has made major improvements that make your work easier or your life better, send the details and specifics and we'll follow-up. Use the addresses in the masthead below to mail information to the Circuit or to send an e-mail to the editor:*

*— Jack Odgaard)*

## Circuit

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## Putting HPO into perspective

This is simply to point out that concern for high performing organization principles came long before the employee survey and that we are seeking to put in place institutional solutions that provide a better chance for insuring the changes last longer than yesterday's newspaper.

If the popular answers are wrong, then why is management so preoccupied with the HPO initiatives? Because the HPO vision is a critical component necessary to assure BPA fulfills its mission.

Lest we forget, BPA's mission is to meet its public responsibilities through a commercially successful business. Motivated employees that believe this is a great place to work are the most critical element we need to provide the highest possible value to Northwest citizens.

We think BPA's mission is a noble one, and the public service ethic that is behind it is an inspiration to many employees. We want to build on this strength to create an organizational environment in which more employees love their jobs and believe BPA is a great place to work. The seven HPO vision elements, which fundamentally are designed around treating all employees with respect, are our guiding light for pursuing and, hopefully, achieving the workplace environment we desire.

HPO, then, is about creating an organizational environment that supports employees in achieving the goal of delivering public benefits to the region through our commercially successful businesses.

So, how are we going about seeking to improve the work environment? Mostly with lots of mundane but, we believe, essential tasks. For example, each of the business lines has created HPO action plans that identify the actions they will take to address each of the seven vision elements. They are now implementing those plans. To give another example, we have developed a system that evaluates 51 percent of managers' efforts on HPO issues (for example, how much weight should be given to employee survey results versus activities designed to achieve the vision elements).

We have created many teams that have been creating the important structure necessary to support this effort. For example, a team effort has been largely responsible for developing the managerial training that will be initiated this month. A rewards and recognition team has completed its work, resulting in broad new policies that have increased the potential for employees to get both monetary and nonmonetary awards.

Finally, we have created an HPO Management Council with membership from each of the busi-

ness line executive management teams to oversee the implementation of the system's development.

The way we are going about implementing the HPO vision may seem plodding and bureaucratic to some. But, it is our belief that, if we put strong systems in place to encourage and reward excellent managers who are focused on making employees successful, we will have our best chance of creating the highest possible value for the region.

I need to say, though, that the HPO vision is about more than just what management can do. It is our goal to create an environment that creates opportunities for employees to achieve excellence and satisfaction in their jobs. But, we also want all employees to believe it is part of their commitment to try to make BPA as good a place to work as possible by taking advantage of the opportunities provided and by striving to achieve our value that everyone is treated with mutual respect.

Each employee will be the judge of whether these efforts actually make BPA a better place to work. We actively want your feedback and are always looking for ways to make BPA a better place to work.

We fully realize the difficulty of what we are seeking to accomplish while we are in the midst of unprecedented change and uncertainty for employees. The potential for creating a regional transmission organization, the implementation of the Business Solutions Project and the redesign of the Shared Serviced product line create distractions that sometimes make it difficult to consider this a great place to work. We are, however, actively working to address employee concerns in these areas and recognize that how we handle these issues will have a significant impact on how employees feel about working at BPA.

What we have accomplished so far

As mentioned earlier, each of the business lines, Corporate and Shared Services has completed HPO action plans and the plans are incorporated in senior managers' contracts. The chart on page 3 connects the vision elements to some of the action items in the performance contracts of the vice presidents of the two business lines, Corporate and Shared Services. Further, the chart points out what employees should actually see in the workplace as a result of the action plans. All the planning in the world is useless unless it produces results.

As you are probably aware by now, a major emphasis is on connecting managers to employees. Managers from the vice presidents on down to most performance managers have contracts in which 51 percent of their performance evaluation is based on HPO-based activities. We have developed a system for evaluating this performance, which is far from perfect but we will assure that we

*Continued on page 3*

## March anniversaries

### 35 years

**Demetrios C. Assuras, "Jim"**, Management Analyst, IS Planning and Projects, Portland

**Harry L. Guinn**, Materials Handler, Materials Management, Vancouver  
**Charles D. Brinson**, Construction Representative, Facility Development, Vancouver

### 30 years

**Paulette I. Seeman**, Computer Assistant, Employee Services, Portland  
**James R. Cronholm**, Accountant, Accounting Operations, Portland  
**Terrin L. Pearson**, Hydraulic Engineer, Generation Scheduling, Portland  
**David A. Norgaard**, Lineman Foreman III, TLM Covington, Covington  
**John M. Welch**, Lead Mechanical Engineering Tech, Facility Development, Portland  
**Gerald A. Armstrong**, Electrical Engineer, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

### 25 years

**Lynda Boetcher-Stelzer**, Vice President, Shared Services, Portland  
**Holly M. Frazier**, Public Utilities Specialist, Operations Planning, Portland  
**Anthony M. Kocjan**, Supervisory Electrical Engineer, SPC, Eugene  
**Linda E. Dial**, Commodity Manager, Materials Management, Vancouver  
**Michael R. Boston**, Electronics Engineer, Control Center Software Design, Vancouver

### 20 years

**Deborah A. Deines**, Employee Development Specialist, Management Services, Portland  
**Lorilee a. Gardner**, Computer Specialist, Application Services, Portland  
**Val H. Smith**, Engineering Technician, Weather & Streamflow Forecasting, Portland  
**John E. Folts**, Power Operations Specialist, Duty Scheduling, Portland  
**Larry D. Brier**, Substation Operator, Substation Operations, North Bend  
**Danny J. Williams**, Welder, Substation Maintenance, The Dalles  
**John Vance Lutes**, Computer Specialist, Software Design & Maintenance, Vancouver  
**Minje P. Ghim**, Electrical Engineer, Substations, Portland

### 10 years

**Joseph M. Yegge**, Cable Splicer, Central Electrical Services, Vancouver  
**John H. Baker**, Chief, Substation Operator III, Substation Operations, Wenatchee  
**Ethan R. Carlson**, Substation Operator Apprentice, Apprentices, Redmond  
**John Michael Cenicerros**, Public Utilities Specialist, Transmission Supply, Vancouver

## Retirements

**Terry Y. Erickson**, Printing Specialist, Printing, retired January 1 with 29 years service.  
**Susan A. Keto**, Contract Specialist, Construction/Services and Field Purchasing, retired January 29 with 22 years service.  
**John M. Schluter**, Senior DC Substation Operator, Transmission Field Services, retired January 1 with 35 years service.  
**Marsha K. Williams**, Technical Training Program Specialist, Technical Training & Continuing Education, retired January 29 with 24 years service.



BPA hasn't done much recruiting for several years while it has been reducing staff. But the agency has now begun a new recruiting effort. Why now? The simple answer is that BPA needs

people **now** in some job areas. And in the next few years, it will need more people to replace the large number of workers who will retire or leave. The latter comes under succession planning. Staying on top of BPA's people needs is part of our high performing organization (HPO) principles.

With the current workforce age and time, BPA expects shortages in the near future in several job fields. These include engineers, accountants, auditors, computer specialists, administrative support, electricians, substation operators, linemen and craftsmen in power system control and system protection.

It takes a long time to train new people, especially in the hourly

## Why is BPA recruiting?



positions. So BPA recruiters are out now recruiting. They are looking for people ready to come to work, and they're building relationships with colleges and training schools as sources for recruits in the future.

Two of BPA's HPO initiatives focus on the recruiting and selection of new employees. The goal is to replenish talent. Recruiting means getting people from a highly qualified and diverse applicant pool to apply. And BPA must be sure to hire qualified people from Equal Employment Opportunity groups available in the labor pool.

Competition is tough for talented people in today's job market. BPA wants to attract the talent it will need to replace the people it loses to retirement. So the agency's new recruiting effort aims to maintain BPA's high quality workforce for the future.

HPO perspective, continued from page 2

carry through in evaluating the results of our efforts. We will continue to improve our planning and evaluation efforts in the next year.

Emphasizing manager connection to employees addresses many of the vision elements. It certainly emphasizes that management is focused primarily on employees. Through that focus, we expect that many of the other elements will also be furthered — employees feel connected to the agency's business, contributions are recognized, employee development is supported, the quality and quantity of communications are high. And, perhaps, most important, integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated. Starting this month, we will initiate training that is designed to help even our best managers enhance their skills to support employees. The training will start with a focus on helping employees develop individual development plans

that support the vision elements of supporting employee development.

The whole effort does not, however, rest entirely on the shoulders of performance managers. We have made some agency-wide initiatives as part of the HPO process that should make a difference — the new rewards and recognition program brings more money and more attention to employee accomplishments. Budgeted funds for awards have increased to 3.5 percent of agency salaries this year and will increase another 1.75 percent in 2001. Moreover, we are strongly encouraging nonmonetary recognition as well.

We are making corrections to make systems more fair and open. The most outstanding examples of this are a policy that strongly encourages opening interest announcements to all BPA employees rather than just employees of one business line and developing a new policy that should

result in a dramatic reduction in promotions through accretion.

A commitment has been made to an extensive program that will provide managers training in all areas that support our HPO vision. This training will be initiated this month and all managers are expected to complete training within 18 months. We have also begun to work with the Great Place to Work Institute, which annually develops the list of the 100 best places to work for Forbes magazine. We believe comparing ourselves against the 100 best places to work, all of which are private sector firms, creates a challenging and, hopefully, energizing goal for our entire organization.

Developing systems that seek to create positive organizational culture change is time-consuming and difficult work. But, if it is successful, it can result in an organization that is rewarding and energizing for all employees while enhancing the quality of life for all Northwest citizens.

## HPO Chart

It would be nice if BPA management could wave a magic wand and have BPA instantly become a high performing organization. But, because BPA is a large organization,

it takes a vision and an implementation plan.

Sometimes it may seem hard to see how all the planning leads to actual change. The chart below matches up the seven HPO vision elements with some all-but-randomly selected action items from the vice presidents'

performance contracts. The last column on the right lists how the vision elements and action items should translate into the employee work world.

On the whole, employees can trace the influence of the major initiative that puts HPO elements in

the performance contracts of most managers in the agency, starting with the highest. Fifty-one percent of performance managers' performance evaluation is based on HPO activities.

Vision element	Action item	Visible change
Employee development is supported	Managers and direct reports develop personal or group developmental goals or training plans tied to key skills needed to be successful at BPA. Create employee development facilitator to support employees in using self-assessment and development tools and resources to take advantage of realistic profiles of needed key skills and career paths in the PBL. Performance managers offer every TBL employee training and development opportunities.	Training budgets are up and managers will be meeting with employees to talk about development plans.
Contributions are recognized	New recognition plans are in place that include increased monetary and nonmonetary recognition.	The agency-wide recognition budget is up. Expect to see more money in awards and more events recognizing employees for their work.
Employees feel connected with the agency's business strategies	The five principles for decisions are integrated into project management activities throughout BPA. Involve employees in PBL Strategic Plan development and explain decisions on major business decisions. Employees are informed of business line and workgroup goals. Employees can identify how their work relates and contributes to at least one TBL target.	Expect to see more money in awards and more events recognizing employees for their work.
Systems are fair and open	TBL ombuds position established, filled and marketed to employees. Provide fair opportunities for employee advancement by competing promotions and development opportunities under a common set of BPA and PBL guidelines communicated to managers and employees. HPO policies that affect Corporate employees will be discussed by the management team and implemented and communicated in a fair and open manner.	Agency-wide, most interest announcements will be open to all and there will be fewer promotions through accretion. Also expect to hear about staffing plans and announcements of developmental and promotional opportunities.
The quality and quantity of communications are high	(K)orporate newsletter will be published regularly. Vice president will meet with nondirect report managers at least twice a year. Vice president will hold monthly "check-in" sessions open to all staff and will hold monthly "bagels with the boss" sessions with PBL managers, focusing on HPO issues and progress. Managers are provided with tools and resources to communicate efficiently with employees and model open-door policy of accessibility channels.	Expect to see managers a whole lot more often. Employees will have more opportunities to meet with upper management. And, every business line will have its own newsletter.
Management is focused primarily on employees	Tier I, II, and III performance managers have met with direct reports for the purpose of clearly communicating performance expectations; formal performance plans are signed and in place for FY 2000. Reduce spans of control to free up managers to focus on performance management by filling five additional performance manager positions in the PBL organizations where there are currently excessive spans of control. All Corporate managers will complete required managerial training for FY 2000.	Again, expect to see managers more often. And expect them to have more training. Integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated.
Integrity, trust and respect are demonstrated	Manage the HPO Management Council to conclusions that assure timely, efficient delivery of products and a forum to create greater consistency of HPO actions across the agency with strong consideration of employee interests. VPs improve understanding of the daily work functions and increase interactions and partnership time with front lines through immersion training. Develop a "check" that staff and first line managers can fill out to increase VP awareness on specific issues. Tools made available to help managers define and develop integrity and trust skills.	The issue here is primarily at the VP level and higher. Expect to hear more from VPs wanting to know what you do and expect more ways to provide feedback to them.

## Big band sw



Jon French



Bob Sinclair



Rich Bunch

## 'Bone' section loves to play

Jon French played in school bands from his early days at Burlington, Wash. Today he plays in half a dozen groups. Besides the BPA band, he plays in the One More Time Around Again Marching Band, the Mt. Hood Pops Orchestra (for 20 years), the Get a Life Marching Band, the Second Wind jazz

group, and a 25-piece brass choir that plays at Warner-Pacific College.

Bob Sinclair grew up in New Jersey. He played in school bands there and with the Fairleigh Dickinson University jazz band during his last two years of high school. Sinclair's musical highlights came in 1963 and 1964 while he attended Emporia College in Kansas. He auditioned statewide and was selected as one of only four brass players each year to play with big name bands for a week. The first was Doc Severinsen's group from the Johnny Carson Tonight Show Band. The second year was with Warren Covington who had taken over the Tommy Dorsey Band. "At the end of the week of rehearsals, we gave standing room only performances," Sinclair says.

## Woodwinds wail and serenade

Sam Perkins comes from Hawaii and got his interest in music from his mother who played guitar and ukulele. He played guitar in high school and took up the tenor sax in college, in 1982. "At 29, I was the oldest one in classes and I was sometimes mistaken for a teacher," he says. His most memorable experience came when he lived in San Diego and played in a country-western group called Pony Express. "We got to be the opening act for three different big name performers at the Big Oak Ranch," Perkins says. He got to warm up the audiences for Merle Haggard, George Jones and Ray Price.

Lou Tauber began playing clarinet in the fourth grade in Portland. He played in bands at Ainsworth Elementary and Wilson High School. At Portland State he played in orchestra and concert band, and he now plays principal clarinet for the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Orchestra.

Tom Wolf is another Portland native and clarinet player. He played in bands in grade school and at Central Catholic High. He also played two years in a ROTC band in college and then quit playing for years. "When I came to BPA, I joined a group that played each year for the engineering Christmas party," he says. "We later formed the nucleus for RIF and the Early Outs."



Viet Duong



Eileen Jensen



Tom Wolf

Lou Tauber

## Three of the trumpet team

Neal Adolf says, "I've been around music for as long as I can remember." The trumpet player in RIF and the Early Outs took piano lessons early from his mother, a music teacher. "I later took up the trumpet and played all through junior high, high school and into college."

Creig Millen played in grade school and high school bands in Gladstone. "In eighth grade, seven of us started a group, The Mariachis,

and we played Herb Albert and the Tijuana Brass material in the 1960s," he says. "We played a campaign gig for Sen. (Richard) Nixon."

Mike D. Miller, RIF himself, started trumpet at age 10 and played in bands all through school. He got a music scholarship to Mt. Hood Community College and was in the jazz lab band that started the Mt. Hood Jazz Festival. He later turned down a music scholarship to the University of Arizona, "because I wanted to study engineering."



RIF and the Early Outs add some swing to employee meetings and performances after being formed was playing for George

How many companies have their own band today? Do any of the Fortune 500 corporations? Any of the major manufacturers? Or any of the big retail or service chains?

Well, BPA may not be up in the charts of business volume with the likes of GE, Microsoft, Enron, Intel or Nike. We may not be among the "favorite" corporations like Ford, UPS, Nordstrom or Southwest Airlines. But BPA does have a lot going for it that most super corporations probably don't have. Like it's own band, for one thing.

"RIF and the Early Outs" will be five years old this fall. The full-size swing band – right out of the big band era – formed in the fall of 1995.

Since then, "RIF and the Early Outs" have played at employee meetings, holiday observances, success share celebrations and special events. All at no cost to BPA and for the benefit of BPA and its employees.

Several people had a hand in the formation of the group. But the impetus came from two engineers – Michael D. Miller in Transmission engineering and Bob Sinclair, now retired. Mike eventually became the bandleader, or "RIF" when the group chose its name. And Sinclair is the backup bandleader when Miller can't make practice.

Miller tells how the band got started. "Our work group – the old engineering group – was having a Christmas party and we wanted to have a band to play at it. Some people knew that we still played instruments (Bob and I) and suggested that we could play.

"We began talking with each other and knew some other BPA folks who still played. So 12 of us



Mike D. Miller



Neal Adolf

Kristi Hansen

Creig Millen



gs at BPA



s and special BPA events. One of their earliest recognition day at headquarters.

Photo by Nick Christmas

got together to play for about 350 folks at the party that year.”

Miller says everyone had fun and after Christmas they decided they could play together “to keep our chops in shape and do more things musically.” So they began to meet to rehearse once a week over the noon hour. “We have a good place in the basement of the 911 building,” Miller says.

As word spread about the group, more BPA musicians showed up to join the band. Members come and go as they stay interested or are able to practice, Miller says. The band now performs with around 22 musicians. More than a dozen others have played with the group in the past.

How did the band get its name? Miller says it formed at the time BPA was going through its major reorganization and start of downsizing. “RIF (Reduction in Force) was being talked about a lot – that it might apply to BPA,” Miller says. “VSI (Voluntary Separation Incentive) was new and a lot of people were taking VSIs, or early outs.”

Miller says, “We talked about several different ideas but settled on ‘RIF and the Early Outs’ as being right for the time.” And how did he come to be the “RIF” of the group? “Half a dozen of us met over lunch in a conference room to talk about organizing the group,” Miller says. “I had thought about it for some time and seemed to have most of the ideas about what we could do. So when we broke up the group had made me the bandleader.”

Miller says that except for a place to practice, the band doesn’t get any funding or help from BPA. “Our playing time and performances are free. And when we perform for a BPA event, we would be there anyway,” he says. The group makes up the time it takes to set up for events.

Members got real enthused when they formed, Miller says. “The players own their instruments and music stands,” he says, “but we needed to buy music so we began a collection to raise money. We put a spittoon out when we play and we get donations for sheet music.”

Word about the band has spread outside of BPA and people have asked the group to play at other events. They recently played for a fun night at the Holladay Park Plaza retirement community near the Lloyd Center.

But so far the group hasn’t ventured outside the main Portland/Vancouver area. And Miller says it’s not very likely to do so in the future. “People don’t want to be away from their homes and families at night,” Miller says. “So when we get a request or offer, I always run it by the band first.”

Miller says, “The primary reason we formed is to be able to play together, practice and improve over the lunch hour at work.” He says, “We specifically like to play for BPA events. As long as we have a place to practice and the people want us, we’ll have a reason to stay around.”

So that’s the story of how “RIF and the Early Outs” came about, and their role as the unofficial BPA band. What about the players? **Suzy Sivyer** of Transmission interviewed band members in recent months. The accompanying anecdotes are excerpts from interviews.

— Jack Odgaard, editor

Strings, wind and keys

Brant Crabbe grew up in Hawaii where his dad played the ukulele and sang Hawaiian songs at home. Crabbe took uke lessons, then learned the trombone and finally took up the guitar in high school. A highlight for him was touring and playing in Europe with his Kamehameha High School band in the summer of 1973.

Linda Krugel says she came from a musical farm family of five kids in Minnesota. “Everyone sang, danced, played piano and one other instrument,” she says. “I started on clarinet but my fingers were too small to cover the holes so I changed to flute in the seventh grade.” She remembers the 1989 Rose Bowl Parade when the One More Time Around Again Marching Band marched and played at Pasadena. “We had over 500 players and our sound was incredible,” she says. “We played Louie-Louie and we just knocked them dead because we were so much fun.”

Roger Whittaker says he loves music, but he didn’t play an instrument until college. He took up the guitar and then got interested in jazz piano. He has been studying it for years and just started playing the keyboard with the BPA band. His highlight and embarrassing moment of his musical career are one and the same. He helped a friend promote a 1997 Herbie Hancock concert in Portland. “We borrowed an old white Mercedes to pick him up at the airport,” Whittaker says. “It sounded like the engine was going to explode when we got on the Interstate. He had a PC with him and I was so nervous that I dropped it putting it in the trunk. He didn’t want a ride back to the airport.”

Brant Crabbe



Linda Krugel

Randi Thomas

Roger Whittaker

Mike Street

The group with the beat

Harold Grappe has played drums since he was nine. He played all through grade school and high school, and today also plays in two other groups. He remembers a 1988 jazz festival at Bellevue, Wash., when he played a Buddy Rich drum solo and got a standing ovation from the crowd of 200 plus.

Mark Pierce hails

from Virginia where he learned to play the drums in grade school. He played in bands all through school and then picked up the bass guitar at Virginia State University. He began to write his own music and lyrics and played in nightclub bands while getting his degree.

Mike Street also started on another instrument. He played trumpet in Portland grade school and then switched to tuba in the eighth grade. His highlight came, he says, when he got to play with RIF and the Early Outs and then

joined Portland’s One More Time Around band.

Photos by Sherry Lind



Cole Barnett

Many talented folks play in other groups – see page 6.

RIF and the Early Outs – current players

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Neal Adolf.....            | Trumpet                      |
| Cole Barnett .....         | Flute, percussion            |
| Rich Bunch (Ret.) .....    | Trombone                     |
| Brant Crabbe .....         | Guitar                       |
| Viet Duong.....            | Alto sax                     |
| Richard Emmel (Ret.) ..... | Alto sax                     |
| Jon French .....           | Trombone                     |
| Harold Grappe .....        | Percussion                   |
| Kristi Hansen .....        | Trumpet (Pub. Power Council) |
| Eileen Jensen .....        | Tenor sax, clarinet          |
| Linda Krugel .....         | Flute                        |

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Stacy Mason .....         | Flute                      |
| Creig Millen .....        | Trumpet, percussion        |
| Mike D. Miller .....      | Trumpet, bandleader        |
| Sam Perkins .....         | Tenor sax, guitar          |
| Mark Pierce .....         | Electric bass              |
| Bob Sinclair (Ret.) ..... | Trombone, asst. bandleader |
| Mike Street.....          | Tuba                       |
| Lou Tauber .....          | Clarinet                   |
| Randi Thomas .....        | Flute                      |
| Roger Whittaker .....     | Piano                      |
| Tom Wolf.....             | Clarinet                   |



When Roy Fox bought a condemned house 20 years ago, he had no idea that he was buying a bit of Portland history.

Fox and his wife Kim were looking for a house to buy when they moved to Portland in 1980. They found a home, then the deal fell through. Roy's brother told him about a house for sale in the Piedmont neighborhood in Northeast Portland and Fox went to take a look. The house was for sale alright but it was also condemned.

Fox and his wife wanted to buy an older home with some character. So he called his wife and said, "I've gotta show you this house." When she arrived at the house, the couple walked around the outside and looked at the rickety back porch, the rotting roof and the collapsed foundation.

Kim touched the doorknob and the back door crashed down into the kitchen. "We must be meant to go in," she said. When they entered, they could see the bathtub in the second floor bathroom from where they stood looking up in the kitchen.

As they sat on the dirty stairs twirling the finials on the stair railing, they looked at each other and said, "This will look nice at Christmas time." Fox says that's when they knew. They had fallen in love with the house and decided to buy it. Fox says they had to pay cash, "because it's hard to get financing on a condemned house." And getting the banks to loan money for repairs wasn't easy.

Fox had just interviewed for a job at BPA. The government had a hiring freeze at the time and Fox was told it would be six months before BPA could hire him. He says they bought the house thinking he would have six months to make repairs. But BPA called a month later and Fox came to work at BPA.

The couple spent evenings and weekends working on the house. It was two years before they could move in because the house needed so much work. In the meantime, they lived with Fox's brother. When his brother moved, the Foxes moved with him.

The Foxes bought the house from a woman who used to work for the Dekum family. The Dekums were a prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century Portland family. Frank Dekum was a banker

and candy maker. The Dekum building in downtown Portland, where the advertising agency Wieden and Kennedy had their headquarters for years, was named for him. The house the Foxes bought was once owned by Otto Dekum, Frank's son.

When it was built in 1884, the place was a farmhouse and had 160 acres of land around it. The house was never remodeled over the years, and it had all the original hardware, doors and moldings. Five stained

glass windows had been removed and the Foxes were able to find all of them and to buy back three. The owner of the other two refused to sell the windows.

Fox had to replace the furnace, water heater, plumbing, wiring and the roof. They had to replaster the walls and ceilings. As they made repairs, the Foxes found items that had originally been stored in the attic and had fallen into wall cavities. They found letters dating back to the 1860s, old schoolbooks, hats,

shoes and a christening dress that belonged to the Dekum family. They plan to donate the items to the Oregon Historical Society.

The Foxes are still learning about the house, the Dekum family and the neighborhood. In 1905, a congregation met to form the Piedmont Presbyterian Church just a block away from the Foxes' home.

The last part of the home the Foxes repaired was the front porch. Fox spent years looking for a photo of the porch and couldn't find one. His wife finally found an old insurance map that had a footprint of the porch. They found a designer who could duplicate the shape and could create a porch in the design of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The porch cost the Foxes as much as they paid for the house.

Cable TV station HGTV (Home and Garden TV) airs a program, "If Walls Could Talk." The Knoxville, Tenn. producers heard about the Fox house and contacted the Foxes last year. Early last fall, the station came to Portland to film the Foxes and their home for the program. The episode (No. 318) aired in mid January.

The Foxes did all of the restoration work themselves – except for rebuilding the porch. Fox says they followed the National Park Service guidelines for historical preservation. "I'd rather do it right," he says. Fox says they have talked about getting a historic listing for the house and may do so in the future.

After all the time and money they spent making their house into a home, Fox says he has no regrets.

"Knowing what we know now, we would make the same choice," he says.

**Nicia Balla edits BPA This Week and the BPA Journal**

## Foxes turn hollowed out house into historic home



By fall of 1992, Fox could survey their new home that was almost completely restored. The one big remaining job was the porch. Someone had added this 1920s porch change, but the Foxes wanted to restore the house to its original appearance. Roy's wife, Kim, found old insurance records in 1994 that had the foundation footprint, so they got a contractor to build a new porch in the original shape and design.



Roy Fox and wife Kim stand outside the back of their "dream home" in 1980, just before they bought the fixer-upper in northeast Portland.

By early 1995, the Foxes had completed the restoration on their historic home. Roy says that the couple's two children, born in 1984 and 1989, temporarily slowed down their restoration, but later helped motivate them to continue the work. Fox says their children have enjoyed growing up in the home with restoration in progress.

Photos by Roy and Kim Fox and relatives



## Many talented folks play in other groups

Several BPA musicians also play in community bands or orchestras. That includes retirees. Some folks in the Portland-Vancouver area belong to more than one community group.

Among those groups and BPA players are the Clackamas Community Band with Bob Sinclair and Tom Wolf. "Get a Life Marching Band" has John French and Harold Grappe. Bob Sinclair also plays in the new Millennium Concert Band at Lake Oswego, and Jon French also plays in the Mt. Hood Pops Orchestra. Lou Tauber plays in the Mittleman Jewish Community Center Orchestra, and the University of Portland Community Orchestra has Byrne Lovell and Audrey Perino.

By far the largest outside band, with the largest BPA contingent of players, is the "One More Time Around Again Marching Band." The band was formed in the early 1980s to perform for the annual Rose Festival parades and events.

It has 550 plus members and may be the largest band in the world. In the late 1980s, the band played and marched in the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, Calif.



The One More Time Around Again Marching Band took part in the 1999 Portland Rose Festival Parade. Several members of RIF and the Early Outs are among the 550-plus members who make up what may be the world's largest marching band.

Several BPA employees and spouses perform each year with Portland's One More Time Around Again band. Many are members of RIF and the Early Outs. Shown after the 1999 Rose Festival Parade are (left to right) Harold Grappe, Linda Krugel, Jon French, Susan Rustvold, Randi Thomas, Mike D. Miller, Marie Torrillo and Audrey Perino.

Photos by Ken Kane



The Ross Complex had some very unusual activity in early February. A SWAT team (Special Weapons and Tactics) from the Vancouver Police Department held a simulation and training exercise in the Dittmer Control Center.

Local police, FBI, hostage negotiators and BPA security took part, with other BPA folks who observed. The exercise took place from 6 p.m. until about midnight. The team ran through four different scenarios of responses to hostages or armed threats.

The training was held after routine work hours to minimize disruption in the workplace. No live weapons or ammunition were used. And the dispatch and scheduling areas were excluded.

A group of 16 high school students from Vancouver and some BPA employees at Dittmer played the roles of hostages. BPA security specialist Pete Jeter and Dana Jensen of financial analysis played the bad guys.

While SWAT team members moved to secure corridors in Dittmer, law officials set up their command post in the nearby DOB-1 building. Marge Nelson, vice president for Transmission's management and services, sat in the DOB-1 debriefing session at the end.

Jeter says the exercise at Dittmer came about after Vancouver police had been there for the Y2K rollover on

## Dittmer gets SWAT-ed

New Year's Day. "They thought Dittmer would be an excellent training ground for their SWAT unit," he says. So he worked with the Vancouver department to set up the Feb. 2 exercise.

Jeter says, "It provided a realistic training opportunity for them



## Ross exhibit covers African American culture and contributions

Clara Tyson works in Shared Services at the Ross Complex. As Transmission continues to adjust its work groups and areas, Tyson's property management group has moved a few times in as many years. Each year, wherever her work group is during February, Tyson sets up her own African American displays for Black History month.

This year Tyson is at the Construction Services Building. Her group is right off the atrium in the basement – a perfect place for several displays. So Tyson set up several tables that show African American culture, history and contributions.

One table had a photo gallery of African Americans in sports. Another had magazine covers and books by or about African Americans. A civil rights and slavery table had books and articles on those subjects.

One table was devoted to medicine, science and discovery. It had newspaper articles blown up, books and photos of African American contributions in those fields. There was also a table on African Americans in music and the arts.

Two interesting displays that quickly attracted attention were a table with African artifacts and

mementos and a long display of prominent African Americans on U.S. postage stamps.

The artifact table included African masks, swords and other items, and books. Tyson says her son, Kevin, collects the cultural items and provided them. The postage stamp display included blow-ups of most of the 65 stamps issued that have had prominent African Americans.

The first U.S. stamp with a black person was a 10-cent stamp in 1940 that had Booker T. Washington on it. The latest African American to be on a stamp is Patricia Roberts Harris early this year.

Tyson puts up her Black history displays at BPA, "out of a love for our culture and past." And a desire to share the knowledge of it with others. "It's important for people to know their history," she says.

Tyson says she began to teach her children at home, "because they didn't teach much about Blacks in school in those years and I wanted my children to know their history." She says, "I want my children and my grandchildren to know that they have a very rich history."



Shellie Dunbar and Nancy Wallschlaeger look over a postage stamp exhibit of famous African Americans (top). Below, Clara Tyson discusses African artifacts with a visitor. Tyson set up half a dozen tables with African American displays for Black History Month. Her exhibits lined the atrium of the Construction Services Building at the Ross Complex.

Photos by Jack Odgaard

## We can end racism, Black leaders say

Half a dozen people spoke at BPA's kickoff of Black History Month in February. The theme of this year's observance was African American legacy and challenges of the 21st century. BPA's African American resource group sponsored several events during the month.

Main speakers at the kickoff were Jim Hill and Margaret Carter. Hill served 10 years in the legislature and is now Oregon state treasurer. He is currently president of the National Association of State Treasurers. He serves on the board of the Northwest Health Foundation and is a former board member of Portland's Urban League.



The Black History Month kickoff at Portland had several speakers. (Left) Former state legislator Margaret Carter chats with COO Steve Hickok during the event. (Right) Oregon State Treasurer Jim Hill talked about racism that still exists.

Carter is a former state legislator who served seven terms in the house. She has been a counselor at Portland Community College for 25 years. She founded the Workforce



2000 Act that provided for skill centers at community colleges. She is now interim executive director for the Urban League of Portland.

Hill said, "We all have a responsibility to bring racism to an end. It's not just something that happened in the past. Now we all must be sure that the things Dr. (Martin Luther) King (Jr.) stood for become a reality."

Carter said, "It's not so much that individuals today are racist, but the system is that way. It's how they are designed." She said, "We must get to the place where the color of one's skin is as trivial as the color of one's eyes."

Carter gave an example of "where we have our priorities screwed up. It costs \$37,000 to house a boy or young man in prison," she said. "But for \$40,000 you can get a Harvard education. I'll give them the difference," she said.

Photos by Jack Odgaard



Let's put some energy  
into this Earth Day

Think globally, act locally! Most BPA employees have heard the phrase or seen the bumper sticker in years past. And it's a pretty sure bet that many, if not all of us, do at least one thing to benefit the earth.

Some BPA employees have the earth-friendly lifestyle down pat. They bike to work, ride the bus or carpool, recycle their sandwich bags, do their laundry during non-peak hours, compost their yard debris . . . in essence, they're *with it*, baby.

Then there are those employees for whom it's all one can do just to remember to get the recycling bins to the curb.

Well, whether you're the master of eco-friendliness or just another person doing what you can, here's an opportunity for you to up your ante in the clean earth game.

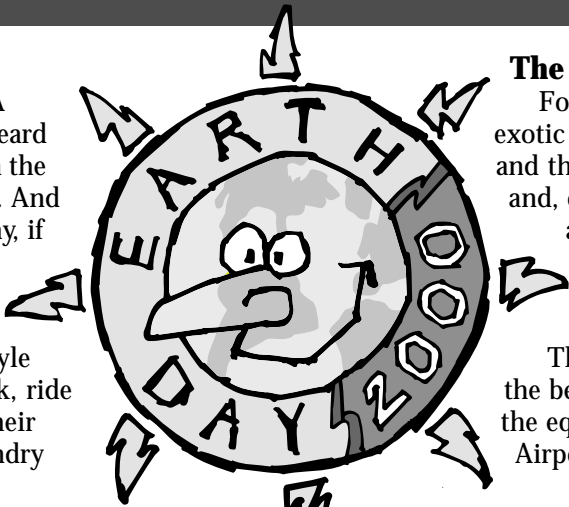
Earth Day is Sat., April 22. The theme for this year is "Clean Energy Now!" Usually, when Earth Day rolls around posters appear on bulletin boards of federal buildings and employees participate in local clean ups. Ho hum!

This year, we're giving Earth Day an energy boost. We're asking for more – more participation, more commitment, more fun. More fun?

That's right. This year we're asking you and your families to have fun and experiment. Adopt a new behavior. Get out and do something you've never done before to support clean energy.

Oh, *excuse me*. Who are we? We are your friendly BPA Earth Day committee. We've ginned up a host of activities we think will tickle your fancy, help the earth and provide you and yours a compost pile full of fun.

So here are some suggestions for starters.



The standard clean up(s)

For those who like to travel to exotic lands, mingle with the flora and the fauna, get your hands dirty and, of course, get out of work for a while, we present to you a no-expenses paid trip to ... you guessed it, the Sandy River Delta!

This scenic area nestled next to the beautiful Columbia River and the equally beautiful Troutdale Airport is the perfect place to

express your Earth Day commitment. Here BPA and the Friends of Trees are joining forces to plant oak trees within the 1400-acre parcel. These trees will suck up the pollutants in our air and replace

them with good ole oxygen. P-Day (planting day) is scheduled for Wed., April 19.

Our illustrious federal rules and regulations are granting a whopping four hours of administrative leave, so plant those trees fast. You don't have much time. Contact Cheri Larson at (503) 230-3325 for more info.

The annual project at the Ross Complex again involves the Ellen Davis Trail. A favorite of Ross employees, the trail meanders through about three miles of lush forested and paved lands of the complex. The trail offers a welcome respite from the eggshell white walls and blaring florescent photons bombarding Transmission and other employees who work there.

On April 14, BPA employees and members of Friends of Trees will plant 100 trees at Ross. The trees include a mix of deciduous and evergreens that are compatible near power line routes. The trees will line part of 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. where it runs into Ross Road, away from the power lines, and then follow the Ellen Davis Trail along Ross Road to

54<sup>th</sup> St. Contact Paul Martin, (360) 418-2072, or Mike Conners, 418-8023, for more info.

Employees in the field can get involved too. How? Make it up! The theme *Clean Energy Now!* should be seen as a war cry. Adopt a stream, a road, or a rest stop for a year.

Plant a tree in your backyard. Form a neighborhood clean up in your community. Get all your coworkers together and find a way to reduce the number of cars you use at work. The list is endless. Be creative.

Take the clean energy challenge

OK, so you're tired of using that minuscule amount of administrative leave to go home early and you really want to do your part for Earth Day. But you regard cleanups and tree planting as work for wimps. If you think you've got what it takes, take on the Earth Day Clean Energy Challenge.

What is the Energy Challenge? Glad you asked. Cheri Larson, who works in Corporate Communications, has the answers. "The Earth Day Challenge is a list of easy to adopt, everyday behaviors that can add up to making a big difference for the planet," Larson says. "They are also activities the whole family can participate in."

Here's how it works. First pick up a pledge card that lists all the activities included in the challenge. You can use the pledge card on the Intranet at the virtual Pledge Central at: <http://webip1/Corporate/KCC/earthday2000.shtml>. We will print the pledge card in the April *Circuit*.

Next, take the pledge card home and collaborate with your family to choose as many activities from the challenge menu as you want to do for the Challenge Week. Activities must be things individuals or families are *not* currently doing (this is about experimenting with new earth-friendly behaviors, remember?).

Fill out the pledge form and return it to KCC-7 attn: Cheri Larson by April 14. Then do those things during the week of April 17 to 22.

It's that easy. BPA's Earth Day committee will publish the total energy savings that result from the challenge and the other Earth Day activities. Watch for that on the Monday, April 24 at Earth Day Central in headquarters and on the Intranet.

Take some time over the next few weeks to talk with your family or friends about what you can do for the challenge. Then fill out your pledge card and send it in by mid April.

Perry Gruber is a press officer in corporate communications

A last bite  
of pizza for  
the memory  
of Y2K

Already faint in memory was the New Year's Eve rollover to year 2000 just 10 weeks before. But the folks who worked to help BPA get Y2K ready over the past five years still didn't mind one last get together.

BPA held pizza lunches one last time at Portland and Ross to say thank-you. The good work of several hundred people helped make the century change a "non-event" for Northwest power supplies.

BPA's information systems group received one of half a dozen awards presented by the Department of Energy this year for efficiency and customer service. DOE presented the awards at its Information Technology Quality Awards conference, Jan. 25, in Las Vegas. The award cited the IS group in BPA's Shared Services for cutting operating costs by over 30 percent while keeping an exceptional level of customer service. John Gilligan (left), DOE's chief information officer, presented the award to Gary Van Bommel who heads BPA's IS group.

DOE photo



The late February event at Ross took place in the atrium of the Construction Services Building.

Photos by Jack Odgaard



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